

Leaf & Dinkins 750

DEAF AND DUMB:

OR,

THE ORPHAN PROTECTED.

AN

HISTORICAL DRAMA, IN FIVE ACTS.



**TAKEN FROM THE FRENCH OF M. BOUILLY,
AND ADAPTED TO THE ENGLISH STAGE.**



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1817.

PROLOGUE,

WRITTEN BY CHARLES MOORE, ESQ.

SPOKEN BY MR. POWELL.

Just is the censure of the vent'rous wight
Who wings for novelty a lawless flight ;
Whose Muse, from rational restriction free,
Paints, what " nor was, nor is, nor e'er shall be." "
Who thinks the probable too dully true,
And keeps the dubious possible in view.
Though vainly he to fair applause pretends,
Whose art commences just where nature ends ;
Yet in the drama's right I must here claim
All nature's offspring as our lawful game :
Our's the free privilege to copy here,
Each varied form humanity can wear,
To win the smile, or wake the moral tear.

Our author aims at novelty, 'tis true ;
But is the picture false, because 'tis new ?
Consents our age to imitate, alone,
And build on no foundations of its own,
Tho' nature still, from her exhaustless store,
Pour forth new treasures, and still teem with more ?
Think not, we mean, in decency's neglect,
To sport with frailty, and to mock defect ;
To bid mean souls with selfish triumph see
Two wants, at least, from which themselves are free.

The sage yet lives whose toils immortal shew,
What human powers without these aids can do.
Taught by commanding genius to restrain
Their causeless pride—who hear and speak in vain.
To prove that pertness wisely had resign'd
Her fluent utterance for a fluent mind ;
And chang'd for ears, with folly's jargon fraught,
The keener sense of uncorrupted thought.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.



| | <i>Drury-Lane.</i> | <i>Philadelphia.</i> |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Julio</i> | Miss De Camp | Mrs. Wheatley |
| <i>Durlement</i> | Mr. Wroughton | Mr. Warren |
| <i>St. Alme</i> | Mr. C. Kemble | Mr. Barret |
| <i>Franval</i> | Mr. Barrymore | Mr. Robertson |
| <i>Del'Epee</i> | Mr. Kemble | Mr. Wood |
| <i>Dupre</i> | Mr. Bannister, jun. | Mr. Entwistle |
| <i>Dominique</i> | Mr. Suett | Mr. Jefferson |
| <i>Pierre</i> | Mr. Palmer | Mr. Abercrombie |
| <i>Philippe</i> | Mr. Trueman | Mr. Durang |
| <i>Etienne</i> | Mr. Chippendale | Mr. King |
| <i>Charles</i> | Mr. Maddocks | Mr. Emberton |
| <i>Madame Franval</i> | Miss Pope | Mrs. Francis |
| <i>Marianne</i> | Mrs. Mountain | Mrs. Burke |
| <i>Claudine</i> | Mrs. Sparks | Mrs. Simpson |



SCENE—Toulouse.

TIME—that of the representation.

DEAF AND DUMB :

OR,

THE ORPHAN PROTECTED.



ACT I.

SCENE I—a room in the palace of Harancour. A whole length portrait of a boy hangs in the centre of the room. Enter DUPRE and PIERRE.

Dup. Don't you be so inquisitive.

Pie. Don't you be so surly.

Dup. I won't be tormented.

Pie. Come, come, Dupre—fellow servants should be communicative, and tell one another every thing that passes in the family.

Dup. And if they did,—woe betide some families!

Pie. Dupre, what is the meaning of all this mystery?

Dup. Why do you nail your eyes on me thus? I won't be worm'd and sifted. What is it you want to pick out of me?

Pie. I want to know the meaning of your private interviews with my master's father: admitted to his closet—doors lock'd—cautionings—whisperings. Take care, take care; I have my suspicions.

Dup. Suspicions!—Of what?

Pie. Of no good, I promise you.

Dup. Why, what do you suspect?

Pie. To be plain with you, that you are aiding and abetting your old master, to make his son, my young master, miserable : in short, you are making up a match for him with the *first*-president's daughter, against his will.

Dup. Oh ! is that all you know ?

Pie. All ! And isn't that enough ?

Dup. Yes,—no.—I could almost wish the whole world knew—Ah ! [looking at the portrait]

Pie. Knew what ? How you fix your eyes on that—

Dup. Do I ?

Pie. Yes ; you never pass through the room without pausing on that portrait.

Dup. Not half an hour ago, I saw him start from his frame, and stand before me.

Pie. What do you mean ? Are you crazy ?

Dup. I believe, it was only a dream.—Perhaps he lives.

Pie. Lives ! What lives ?—Why, look, man, 'tis but a picture.

enter DARLEMONT, *in a morning dress.*

Dar. How now ? What are you doing ?

Pie. Only looking at this picture, sir.

Dar. That picture ! and why are you looking at it ?

Pie. By Dupre's account it ought to be a miracle ; he says, he saw it start from its frame, and stand before him.

Dar. Fellow !

Pie. Why, didn't you say so, Dupre ?

Dar. Begone !

[exit Pierre

Are you mad Dupre ?

Dup. Almost, I am.

Dar. How dare you hint at what must be eternally concealed ?

Dup. Dare ? The sinner dreads no tyrant, but his own conscience.

Dar. Let that portrait be removed.

Dup. No, that it never shall be.

Dar. Ha !

Dup. Frown on : there it shall remain and daily haunt us.

Dar. Again this insolence ? Remember, villain, that you are my slave.

Dup. I do, and I remember too that you are mine : accomplices in guilt are of necessity the slaves of each other.

Dar. I must contain myself. [aside] I see, I see, Dupre, that neither my gifts, nor my promises, have satisfied you : however, I have been thinking of you :—Leave me !—You will soon find that you are not forgotten.

Dup. I wish I were : but you and I can never be forgotten ; even in the grave we shall be remember'd, only to be curs'd, despis'd, and hat-ed. [exit]

Dar. Must I hold wealth, reputation, nay, life itself, perhaps, at the disposal of this dotard ?—His slave !—While he spoke it, audacious as the reptile toad, he dar'd to fix his brazen eyes upon me.—Let him accuse.—Am I not Darlemont, possessor of the fortune and the power of Harancour ?—Where is the man who will venture to support his accusation ?

re-enter PIERRE.

Besides, my son's marriage with the president's daughter, will, I hope,—Why are you loitering there ?

Pie. Sir, I am only waiting till my master comes in.

Dar. What ! is he abroad so early ?—Something disturbs him.

Pie. Yes, sir : indeed, something or other seems to disturb every soul in the house. [going]

Dar. What's that you say ?—Come hither, Pierre :

you know the deference due to your master's father : be faithful, and you shall profit by it. I must have no prying ; mark me, no babbling : talk not of me, nor my affairs. As for Dupre, at times, you see, he raves ; he has lost his senses ; he grows old——

Pie. In your service, sir.

Dar. And therefore what would be punished in another, I overlook in him. Pay no regard to his wanderings, except, observe me, should you think them extraordinary, to inform me of them,—me alone ; no other, not even my son. I have my reasons ; which are not for you to enquire into. Obey me, and depend on my bounty. [exit

Pie. Your bounty ? Humph ! That may be well enough ; but the devil take your pride. A few years ago, this grand signior was but a petty merchant ; and now——

enter ST. ALME.

St. A. Was not that my father ?

Pie. Yes, sir ; you seem as much ruffled as he was.

St. A. My soul is on the rack : yet I'm resolv'd : —this hated marriage never can, never shall, take place. No, never, never will I renounce thee, my lovely Marianne !—

Pie. Then, sir, you must renounce your father's favour and fortune.

St. A. Unfeeling prejudice ! Is she not the daughter of a man, whose memory is honour'd and belov'd ? The sister of a man of virtue and of talents,—of Franval ? the most renowned advocate of Toulouse ?

Pie. True, sir ; but his talents are the only dependence of her and her mother.

St. A. While my father was but a merchant, he would have thought himself honour'd by my marriage with the daughter of the seneschal Franval ; but since he has inherited the estates of his nephew and ward, the unhappy count of Harancour, his nature

seems changed ; and he now listens only to the dictates of his ambition.

Pie. Ah ! the old servants of the family often talk of the young count of Harancour : they say, he had the misfortune to be deaf and dumb.

St. A. 'Tis true, he had. Poor boy ! my father took him to Paris about eight years ago, in hopes that this affliction might be removed ; and, whether improper medicines were administer'd to him, or that his constitution sunk under the efforts for his cure, I know not ; but there, in a short time, he died in the arms of Dupre, who accompanied my father on this journey.

Pie. That's the secret ; now I no longer wonder, that I so often catch Dupre gazing on that picture of the young count.

St. A. Do you ? 'Tis only natural in him ; this youth was the last remaining branch of an illustrious family, which Dupre had long faithfully served. My poor Julio ! He once saved my life : how bravely he expos'd himself for me ! Never, never will his image quit my heart. I see him at the moment of his departure—dumb as he was, his form spoke moving eloquence ; every look was so affectionate, every action so expressive ;—dear, dear, lamented Julio ! He crush'd me into his very heart, as if he had fore-known, and would have told me, that that embrace was to be our last. Ah ! were he now alive, I should enjoy his tender and endearing friendship, and my father, less opulent, would not then oppose my union with Marianne.

Pie. But, you say, sir, you have never yet told this lady that you love her : how then do you know what her thoughts of you may be ?

St. A. I can't mistake 'em ; our mutual tremors when we meet ; my faltering voice, her downcast eyes ; and other thousand, thousand delicious proofs of sympathizing thoughts.

Pie. You know best, sir ; but, for my part, I should wish for more substantial proofs : besides, her mother—

St. A. Born of a noble family, is, if possible, more haughty than my father ; but her son has a complete empire over her affections : he is my friend ; he cannot but have discovered that I love his sister ; and as our intimacy daily strengthens, I must presume that he approves my pretensions.

DOMINIQUE (without.)

Dom. I'll just deliver my message myself.

Pie. Hush !—here comes their gossiping footman, old Dominique :—now, sir, if you wish to know the lady's real sentiments, only let me set his tongue running, and he will tell you, in his own chuckling talkative way, all that he sees, and hears.

enter DOMINIQUE.

Ha !—Good morning, friend Dominique. What brings you to our house ?

Dom. Good day, good day, friend !—So sir ! (*to St. Silme*) you're an early stirrer.—*Ha ! ha ! ha !—I saw you just now,—I saw you,—ha ! ha ! ha !—*

St. A. Saw me !

Dom. Yes, I did ; pacing backwards and forwards, under my young lady's window. *Ha ! ha ! ha !*

St. A. I was only taking the morning air, I do assure you, Dominique.

Dom. *Ha ! ha ! ha !*

Pie. *Ha ! ha ! ha !—What do you mean, Dominique ?*

Dom. Why, that I'd take the morning air myself, old as I am, if I hoped to see a young, blooming, lovely,—*ha ! ha ! ha !—But, no,—fast as a church ; she was up till two o'clock this morning practising the song, that somebody made on her recovery :—Ha ! ha ! ha ! and at last went to bed, I dare say, only to dream of the author—Ha ! ha ! ha !*

St. A. Your frankness and good humour forbid dissimulation; yes, Dominique, I adore your charming mistress.

Pie. Ay, that he does; the more his misfortune.

Dom. Misfortune! and pray, sir, why so?

Pie. Because I can see very well, and so do you too, Dominique, that your young lady doesn't care a straw for my master.

Dom. You can see it, can you? Lord! what a clear-sighted wiseacre thou art!—Ha! ha! ha!

St. A. Why, Dominique, do you believe she loves me?

Dom. No, I don't believe it; I know it. Why, there was, in the first place—

St. A. Ay, Dominique;—

Pie. Let him go on, sir.—Well, but let's hear what proofs.—

Dom. Proofs! a thousand.—Why, when she was recovering from her last illness, and I told her how you had call'd to enquire after her—"Did he come himself, Dominique?" says she, "and did he come often?"—"Every minute in the day, ma'am," says I.—"And did he look concerned?"—"Ma'am," says I, "he looked charmingly; his eyes were as red as a ferret's; his cheeks as white as a sheet; he looked like a perfect ghost; a sweet lover-like figure, indeed, ma'am."—"I think I'm better," says she, "Dominique: I'm a great deal better: I'm sure I shall soon be well."—Ha! ha! ha! true love is your best doctor.

Pie. O, Lord! and is this all you know?

Dom. No, sir; it is not all I know; nor half I know. She gave me such a scolding about you t'other day—

St. A. About me?

Dom. Yes. She was painting away at her little desk, and took no notice of my coming in to put the room to rights; so I crept softly on tip-toe

tow'rds her ; and, peeping over her shoulder,—(I love to detect the sly rogues)—what should I behold but the picture of a young gentleman.

St. A. What young gentleman ?

Pie Yes, what young gentleman ?

Dom. What young gentleman ?—“How like it is,” says I, pop, at once, without thinking of it.—“Like,” says she, starting up ; “Like who ? Do you think it is like my brother ?”—“Your brother ! Like a certain person, called captain St. Alme, to be sure.”—“St. Alme ?”—says she, pouting and vex'd a little ; “I desire, Dominique,” you know her way—“I desire you won't say any such thing. I beg and desire you won't.” And away she went, blushing as red as a rose, but all the while hiding *somebody* carefully in her bosom.—Ha ! ha ! ha !—But, Lord, I stand chattering here—

St. A. Thank you, thank you, Dominique ; you have made me happy beyond measure !

Dom. I knew I should.—Doesn't care a straw for my master !—Ha ! ha ! ha ! I knew very well I should make you happy : I love to make people happy, and to be happy myself. But I must not forget my errands. (*takes out a paper*) What with my old mistress, and my young mistress, and my master—(*going*) O, Lord ! he sent me here to tell you, that he wants to speak with you.—Now don't you blab one word of this, for your life : these girls have such freaks and vagaries ! Tho' they're in love over head and ears, and can't conceal it a moment ; yet they expect other folks to be blind, and see nothing at all of the matter. (*going*)

St. A. Pray, say, I'll wait on your master, Dominique :

Dom. To be sure ! you'll wait on my master, because you expect to see my young mistress. Ha ! ha ! ha !—O, the turnings and twinings of your true lovers !—Yes, yes ; she hid the picture in her fair bosom. I warrant, as near as she could to her heart ! Ha ! ha ! ha !

[exit]

St. A. Now, Pierre, is there any cause for doubt?

Pie. I think not, sir.

St. A. And would my father tear me from her? Never! Run to the president's; enquire when I may have the honour of seeing him. I'll go to Franval's, avow to him my passion for his sister, and openly declare myself to her in her brother's presence. If I obtain their consents, I'll instantly wait on the president, acquaint him with my love for Marianne, make him refuse me his daughter, and thus strike at once at the very root of my misfortune. [exeunt

SCENE II—*a square in the city of Toulouse; on one side the palace of Harancour, on the other the house of FRANVAL, bridge, church, &c. enter DEL'EPÉE and Theodore.*

(Theodore precedes Del'Epee, and advancing in great agitation, expresses by signs that he recollects the spot they are in)

Del'E. This warm emotion, this sudden change in all his features, convinces me that he recollects this place. Hadst thou the use of speech!

(Theodore, looking round him, observes a church, and gives signs more expressive of his knowing the place.)

Del'E. It is, it must be so;—and am I then at length arrived at the period of my long and painful search!

(Theodore now sees the palace of Harancour: he starts, rivets his eyes to it, advances a step or two, points to the statues; utters a shriek, and drops breathless into the arms of Del'Epee.)

Del'E. Ah, my poor wronged boy, for such I'm sure you are, that sound goes to my very heart!—He scarcely breathes. I never saw him so much agitated.—There, there; come, come.—Why was a voice denied to sensibility so eloquent!

(Theodore makes signs with the utmost rapidity, that he was born in that palace, that he lived in it

when a child, had seen the statues, come through the gate, &c. &c.)

Del'E. Yes; in that house was he born. Words could not tell it more plainly. The care of Heaven still wakes upon the helpless.

(Theodore makes signs of gratitude to Del'Epee, and fervently kisses his hands. Del'Epee explains that it is not to him, but to Heaven, that he ought to pay his thanks. Theodore instantly drops on his knee, and expresses a prayer for blessings on his benefactor.)

Del'E. (bare-headed, bows, and says) O, thou, who guidest at thy will the thoughts of men; thou, by whom I was inspired to this great undertaking; O, power omnipotent! deign to accept the grateful adoration of thy servant, whom thou hast still protected, and of this speechless orphan to whom thou hast made me a second father! If I have uprightly discharged my duty; if all my love and labours for him may dare to ask a benediction; vouchsafe to shed its dews on this forlorn one, and let his good be all my great reward!

(Del'Epee raises Theodore, and embraces him) We must proceed with caution;—and, first, to learn who is the owner of this house.

(Theodore is running to knock at the gate; Del'Epee stops him, &c.)

enter PIERRE.

Pie. Well; that president is the best natured gentleman,—

Del'E. O, here comes one that may, perhaps, instruct me. (*Signs to THEODORE to attend*) Pray, sir, can you tell me the name of this square?

Pie. (aside) Strangers, I perceive—It is called St. George's square, sir—(*Looking at THEODORE*)

Del'E. Thank you, sir. Another word. Do you know this superb mansion?

Pie. (*observing DEL'EPEE and THEODORE more closely*) Know it!—I think I ought;—I've lived here these five years.

Del'E. That's fortunate. And you call it—

Pie. (*aside*) Plaguy inquisitive!—A few years ago it was called the palace of Harancour—

Del'E. Of Harancour?

Pie. But at present it belongs to a gentleman of the name of Darlemont. (*Observing THEODORE*) 'Tis odd—He seems to talk by signs;—Is he dumb?—(*During the above dialogue, Theodore examines the gateway, pillars, arms, &c. of the palace of Harancour; and explains to Del'Epee his recollection of the various objects, &c.*)

Del'E. And,—who is this gentleman of the name of Darlemont?

(Theodore now turns his face fairly towards PIERRE.)

Pie. Gad, how like it is!—Sir?—Who is he?

Del'E. Yes; I mean, what is his rank, his profession?

Pie. (*still looking at THEODORE*) Profession!—He has no profession, sir; he's one of the richest men in Toulouse:—(*Looking at THEODORE*) One might almost swear to it.—Your servant, sir; I'm wanted.—(*aside*) Very odd, all these questions. (*looking at THEODORE*) The strongest likeness I ever saw in my life.

[exit PIERRE into the palace

Del'E. Ay, my friend; you little know the motive of my questions. There's not a moment to be lost. This house, that once belong'd to so distinguished a family; this Darlemont, the present possessor of it; every circumstance relating to it must be publicly known in Toulouse. I'll instantly away, seek out some lodging, and then—But, for fear it should escape me—(*writes in a note book*)—Harancour,—Darlemont.

(Theodore, as Del'Epee writes, runs to him with eager curiosity. Del'Epee presses him in his arms.)

Del'E. Yes, my poor mute Theodore ; if you belong to parents who can feel, no doubt, they still lament your loss, and will with transport hail your return ; if, as I fear, you are the victim of unnatural foul-play, grant me, Providence, to unmask and confound it ! So men shall have another proof, that every fraud will soon or late be detected, and that no crime escapes eternal justice.

[*Exit Del'Epee, leading Theodore, who looks back at the palace of Harancour, &c.*]



ACT II.

SCENE—FRANVAL's library. A library table, with books, parchments, &c. vases with flowers, &c. FRANVAL discovered reading.

Fran. I shall never be happy, till I have accomplish'd this task : to reconcile mistaken friends, is an employment as useful to society, as it is honourable to my profession.

enter MARIANNE, with a basket of flowers in her hand.

Mar. Good morning, brother.

Fran. (rises) Good morning, Marianne.

Mar. Late and early—always at your studies.

Fran. The causes which a lawyer is expected to undertake, are frequently so disguised, either by the passions, or the arts of man, that, if he is honest, he can't consider them too attentively.

Mar. Ah ! your's must often be a painful employment.

Fran. 'Tis odious, indeed, to witness villany ; but then, to justify the innocent, is the noblest and most gratifying duty of man.

Mar. True ; it is sweeter to the soul than these

flowers to the sense. (*she takes the flowers out of the vases, and puts those which she has brought into their places*)

Fran. Every morning fresh odorous flowers, and a kind kiss from my dear sister! (*he kisses her*)—my thoughts must be clear and pure. Ah, Marianne, delightful as these gifts are to me, I have a young friend, to whom they would be still more precious.

Mar. What do you mean, brother?

Fran. Nay, I wouldn't make you blush. (*he leads her forward, and looking stedfastly in her face says*)—sister!

Mar. (with a downcast look) Brother!

Fran. Your presents are sweet, your affection sweeter; yet both want of their true value, while you deny me your confidence.

Mar. Nay!

Fran. Besides, Marianne, you may as well frankly own it; for your heart is too innocent and simple to wear disguise gracefully.

Mar. Pray, forbear!

Fran. And why this hesitation? Do not the noble qualities of St. Alme make him worthy any woman's love?

Mar. I—I—believe, they do.

Fran. I won't speak of his person,—

Mar. Which is elegance itself.

Fran. I won't speak of his countenance,—

Mar. Which is all comeliness and candour.

Fran. But, for his heart and understanding,—

Mar. They are excellent and generous, indeed!

Fran. What woman but must be happy with such a husband?

Mar. So I have often thought! (*sighing*)

Fran. In a word, Marianne, he loves you.

Mar. Why do you think so?

Fran. Every look declares it.

Mar. Ah! I'm afraid to trust to looks.

Fran. Are you so ?—At last, Marianne, you're caught :—You own, then, that you love him in return ?

Mar. Oh ! (*hides her face in his bosom*)

enter ST. ALME (hastily.)

Fran. My friend, you come at a lucky moment.—But you seem disturb'd : is any thing the matter ?

St. A. Never stood I so much in need of your friendship. (*takes FRANVAL's hand*)

Mar. Heavens !

Fran. Explain yourself.

Mar. I'll leave you. (*going*)

St. A. No, stay a moment ; I intreat you, stay ! My father—Franval—my father !

Fran. What of him ?

St. A. His dreadful menaces still sound in my ears. And wherefore were they utter'd ? Because I cannot second his ambition. Had he requir'd my blood, my life, I would have given them willingly :—but to renounce her I love, the tenderest and first affections of my soul !

Mar. Ah !

St. A. Cruel parents ! You cannot look with our eyes ; you cannot feel with our hearts ! Are we your children—but to become your victims ?

Fran. Be calm, and tell me what has pass'd.

St. A. My father has this morning informed me, that the marriage I have so much dreaded, must take place within these three days. “Three days !” I exclaimed : “no, sir ; never, never.” This reply, which burst from the very bottom of my wounded heart, rouz'd his displeasure into a rage too violent for all my excuses or prayers to pacify. He insisted on my instantly giving him a reason for my peremptory refusal.—Hoping the name of her whom I adore might disarm his fury, I at once declared, that my affections were irrevocably devoted to——

Fran. To whom ? Speak out.

St. A. To your sister.

Mar. Me !

St. A. (*throwing himself at her feet*) Forgive my rashness ! Yes ; to you : 'tis you alone I love, and ever, ever shall ; and, might I hope——

Mar. (*much agitated and raising him*) What said your father ?

St. A. Embarrass'd at first, and overpower'd with confusion, he acknowledg'd your worth and beauty ; but added, that he had disposed of me elsewhere, and enjoined me to forget you.——“ Sooner forget to live.”—At this, his wrath redoubled : He reprobated my audacious disobedience, threatened me with his malediction, and forbade me ever to appear in his presence, but with repentance and submission.

Mar. Alas !

St. A. My whole frame shudder'd while he spoke ; yet I felt my heart revolt against this tyranny. Banish'd the bosom of a father, I come to find a refuge in the arms of a friend.

Fran. (*embracing him*) Of a friend, my dear St. Alme, whose first advice to you is, to calm this over-eager sensibility ; and to remember that a parent is to be respected, even under his mistakes.

St. A. Ah ! were the heart of Marianne but mine——

Fran. Of that you are secure.

Mar. O, brother !

St. A. Am I so bless'd ? Am I indeed ?

Fran. And why dissemble what will alleviate his sufferings ?

Mar. And why reveal what may encrease our misery ?

St. A. O, no ; since I am that bless'd, obstinate and stern as my father is, I shall subdue, I shall soften his inflexibility ; and he will hereafter rejoice in the happiness of his children.—But I forget——I must away.

Fran. Whither are you hurrying ?

St. A. To the president's : I cannot now tell you more. We shall have every thing to hope, if I can prevail on him to countenance my project. I shall, I will ! Secure of thy heart, my lovely Marianne, what can I not perform ? [exit

Fran. St. Alme ! my friend ! Hear me one moment.

Mar. I tremble, lest his ardent temper should precipitate him into—

enter DOMINIQUE, with books under his arm.

Dom. Sir, your mother desires to know whether you chuse to have breakfast in your study.

Fran. By all means ; as she pleases.

Mar. You have not been to pay her your respects this morning.

(Dominique lays the books on FRANVAL's desk, and places a breakfast-table, chairs, &c.)

Fran. Come, let us wait on her. Cheer up, Marianne ; all will go well yet.

Mar. You are very good, brother. But you shouldn't have told.

[*exeunt FRANVAL and MARIANNE*

Dom. I'm tired to death already. I verily believe, I have walked five miles this morning. Let me see that I have done all my errands though, or madame Franval will be telling me I begin to grow old, and good for nothing.—(*looks over a paper*)—“Cards of invitation to the prior, and the countess of —”—Both delivered.—“Books from the library”—There they are.—“Go to the lawyer, and desire him to stop proceedings against the poor officer, the money being ready to discharge the debt.”—Paid by my good master to save an unfortunate family from prison—Ha ! ha ! ha!—O, stop !—Ah !—“And as I return, to leave six crowns with”—sent by my young mistress, Marianne, to the widow of the late porter of the palace of Harancour—

That's because she's a favourite of capt. St. Alme's. How the poor soul did bless and pray for her lovely benefactress !—Ha ! ha ! ha ! I am tired ; but it's a pleasure to go on such errands—Ha ! ha ! ha ! They're coming.

enter MADAME FRANVAL, leaning on FRANVAL'S arm—MARIANNE following.

[*exit DOMINIQUE, who returns immediately with breakfast, which he places on the table and exit.*]

Mad. F. Yes, my son, there are few families in Toulouse more ancient than ours ; and, though but an advocate, I trust, that you will shew yourself worthy the name of Franval.

Fran. My employment, madam, is an honour to all who exercise it properly.

(*they sit. MARIANNE prepares the breakfast.*)

Mad. F. The office of senechal had been, I may say, for ages held by your ancestors ; at the death of your father, I was obliged to sell it, and the degradation cuts me to the soul.

Fran. Yet, madam, this very circumstance has stimulated me to attain by my own talents that consideration in the world, for which I should otherwise, in all probability, have stood indebted merely to accident and prejudice.

enter DOMINIQUE.

Dom. A letter for you, madam (*gives MADAME FRANVAL a letter*) The servant waits for an answer.

Mad. F. Have you been on those messages ?

Dom. Yes, madam.

Mad. F. (*reading*) . “ *Darlemont !* ” What occasion can Darlemont have to write to me ?

Fran. (*with surprise, and looking at MARIANNE*) Darlemont !

Mad. F. (*reads*) "Madam, I take the freedom
"of addressing myself to you, in claim of the most
"sacred rights"—(*to Dominique*) You may leave
us. [exit DOMINIQUE]

(*reads*) "Sacred rights of a father." What does he
mean? (*reads*) "Rights of a father.—My son loves
your daughter." Indeed! (*reads*) "I met him this
moment, and he assures me that his love is re-
turned."

(They all rise. Marianne starts. Madame Franval
casts a severe look at her.)

Fran. (*diverting her attention from Marianne*) Go on, madam; I beseech you, go on.

Mad. F. (*reads*) "Be assured their union never
"can take place." Ha! ha! ha!—No, sir; be assur-
ed their union never can take place.

Mar. What will become of me!

Mad. F. (*reads*) "I therefore trust, you will for-
"bid him your house; and no longer encourage him
"to contemn and brave the authority of a father.
"Darlemont." Encourage! I encourage! Insup-
portable insolence!

Fran. Be calm, I beg you, madam.

Mad. F. Who told this petty trader, this gentle-
man of yesterday, that I should dream of an alliance
with his mushroom family?—What, have his riches
made him forget the disparity of our births? Daughter,
I cannot believe this of you. I hope, son Franval,
after such an insult, you will no longer honour this St.
Alme with your notice. As for the father, should
he ever—Yes, he shall have an answer. (*sits down to write*)

enter DOMINIQUE.

Dom. Sir, a stranger desires to speak with you.

Fran. A stranger?

Dom. Yes, sir; a very good looking gentleman:
I believe he's a clergyman.

Fran. Desire him to walk in. [exit DOMINIQUE]

Mad. F. (reading the letter with vexation)

"Their union never can take place." Ha ! ha ! ha !

Mar. My dreams of happiness are ended.

Fran. Madam, the gentleman comes : if you please, we'll consider the letter another time.

Mad. F. (rising) I won't honour him with an answer at all.

enter the ABBE DEL'EPEE, introduced by DOMINIQUE.

Dom. Walk in, sir ; pray walk in. [exit

Del'E. (salutes the ladies ; then FRANVAL) I presume, sir, you are monsieur Franval ?

Fran. At your service.

Del'E. Could you favour me with a few moments' conversation ?

Fran. Very willingly. May I take the liberty of asking, who—

Del'E. I am from Paris,—my name is Del'Epee.

Fran. Del'Epee !—The instructor of the Deaf and Dumb ?

Del'E. (bows)

Fran. Madam,—sister,—you see before you one, who is an honour to human nature.

Del'E. Sir.—

(the ladies salute Del'Epee with great respect.)

Fran. How often have I admired you as the benefactor of mankind, as the dispenser of the most valuable gifts of Heaven !

Del'E. Then have I been fortunate indeed, in applying myself to you.

Fran. How can I serve you ?

Del'E. By aiding me to redress the injur'd.—Your high reputation, sir, has brought me hither, in order to communicate to you an affair of the utmost importance.

Mad. F. Daughter, we'll retire. (going.)

Del'E. If you have time to listen, ladies, pray

stay ;—It is my earnest wish to interest every virtuous and feeling heart in the cause I have undertaken.

Mad. F. If we have your leave, sir.

Fran. Be seated, pray, sir.

Del'E. Perhaps, you will think my story tedious : yet I must be particular.

Mar. How interesting an appearance !

Fran. Pray, proceed !

Del'E. This, then, is my business. About eight years ago, a boy, deaf and dumb, found in the dead of night on the Pont Neuf, was brought to me by an officer of the police. From the meanness of his dress, I supposed him of poor parents, and undertook to educate and provide for him.

Fran. As I know you have done for many others.

Del'E. I soon remarked an uncommon intelligence in his eyes ; a well manner'd ease and assurance in his behaviour ; and, above all, a strange and sorrowful surprise in his looks, whenever he examined the coarseness of his clothing :—in a word, the more I saw, the more I was convinced, that he had been purposely lost in the streets. I gave a public, full, minute description of the unhappy foundling : but in vain. Few will claim interest in the unfortunate. •

Fran. Ah ! few indeed !

Del'E. Plac'd among my scholars, he profited so well by my lessons, that he was, at last, able to converse with me by signs, rapid, almost, as thought itself. One day, as we were passing the High Court of Justice, a judge alighted from his carriage :—the sight gave Theodore—for so I call'd him—an emotion, violent and instant :—the tears ran down his cheeks in torrents, while he explain'd to me, that, when a child, a man, who often wore similar robes of purple and ermine, had been accustomed to caress, and take him in his arms. Observe :—another time, a grand funeral pass'd us in the streets ;—I watch'd the various changes in his colour, and learn'd that he

had himself, long ago, follow'd the coffin of the very person, by whom he had been thus fondly caress'd.—I could not be mistaken.—I concluded that he was probably the orphan heir of some chief magistrate, purposely turned adrift in a strange and populous city—defrauded, robb'd, and even fortunate to have escap'd with life.

Mar. Poor youth!

Del'E. These strong presumptions redoubled all my hope and zeal.—Theodore grew every day more and more interesting. He confirmed to me many circumstances of his story :—Yet, how proceed in his behalf? He had never heard his father's name, he neither knew his family, nor the place of his birth. Well, sir,—some months ago, as we went through the Barriere d'Enfer, observing a carriage stopp'd and examined, the recollection suddenly struck him, that this was the very gate through which he entered Paris, and that the chaise, in which he travelled with two persons, whom he well remember'd, had, in this very spot, been thus visited. I see,—I see it in your eyes,—you anticipate my firm conviction, that he came from some city in the south of France, of which, in all likelihood, his father had been the chief magistrate.

Fran. For Heaven's sake, sir, go on.

Del'E. Finding all my researches ineffectual, I resolved, at last, to take my pupil with me, and traverse, in person, and on foot, the whole of the south of France.—We embraced each other, invoked the protection of Heaven, and set forward. After a journey—long—fatiguing—almost hopeless—we this morning—bless'd be the divine Providence!—arrived at the gates of Toulouse.

Fran. Good Heavens!

Del'E. He knew the place, he seiz'd my hand, utter'd wild cries of joy, and led me quickly, here and there, thro' various quarters of the city. At last, we arrived at this square: he stopped—pointed to the

mansion opposite your door—shrieked, and senseless dropp'd into my arms.

Fran. The palace of Harancour !

Del'E. Yes,—and from the enquiries I have already made, I am convinced that my poor boy is the lawful heir of that family ; and that his inheritance has been seized by his guardian and maternal uncle,—Darlemont.

Mad. F. I don't doubt it. O, the wretch ! (*she rises*)

Del'E. To you, sir, I have been directed,—to your talents,—to your virtue :—and to you, in the names of justice and humanity, I now address myself for aid.—Earth, Heaven, and all the blessings it can promise, will second my petition.—O, let the voice of irresistible truth be rais'd in his behalf !—Let not a noble orphan, denied the precious bounties of nature, and quickened by these privations into ten-fold sensibility—let him not, I conjure you,—let him not fall the victim of the ambitious and the base !—

Fran. Sir, could I have listened to a tale like this unmoved, I were unworthy the form and name of man. [*to Mad. F.*] If ever I were truly proud of my profession, madam, it is at this moment, when I am call'd upon to assault the powerful, and defend the helpless. [*to Del'E.*] Sir, the faculties of life, body, and soul, while I possess them, shall be employed to serve him.

Mad. F. Thank Heaven, I shall see him reduced to his original insignificance at last.

Mar. Ah ! Poor St. Alme !—Brother,—

Fran. I don't forget St. Alme.—Sir, I must now acquaint you, that this Darlemont is the father of my dearest friend :—delicacy, duty, require me to try persuasion, gentleness, and every milder method :—should these fail with him, I shall be driven to expose his guilt, and publicly compel him to restore the rights, which, I have cause to fear, he has so unnaturally usurped. Where is your pupil ?

Del'E. I left him at our lodging ; and, his anxiety, no doubt, makes my absence seem long.

Fran. Dear sir, why didn't you bring him with you?

Mar. How impatient I am to see him!

Fran. Let me beg that you will use us like old friends, and accept apartments here.

Del'E. I am afraid,—

Mad. F. Not, I hope, to do us a pleasure and an honour.

Del'E. It is impossible to resist such goodness.—madam, I obey. (*Del'E. and Fran. talk together.*)

Mad. F. Come Marianne, we'll go and prepare for our young guest.—Yes, yes, you shall have an answer; my son shall be your correspondent.—Come, Marianne. [*exit MADAME FRANVAL*

Mar. Brother, remember your friend.—Your servant, sir. [*exit MARIANNE*

Fran. Yes, sir; we shall have great difficulties to encounter in our way: the wealth and influence of Darlemont are formidable; his temper, daring, haughty, and obstinate. Yet, in the first president, we have so upright and wise a judge to hear us, that, if truth and justice are on our side, our triumph is certain.

Del'E. I rely entirely on you. Let the result of our enquiry be what it may,—to have done my duty, will be my consolation,—and to have known you, sir, my recompence. [*exeunt*



ACT III.

SCENE I—*the same room in the palace of Harancour.*

enter DARLEMONT, followed by PHILIPPE and ETIENNE, to whom he gives his hat and cane, and they retire.

Dar. My life is one continued scene of terror and disappointment. This undutiful, this headstrong boy! To refuse the match I had provided for him! Thus to thwart my long-labour'd plan for our secu-

ri~~ty~~!—But let the rebel dread the consequences of his disobedience.

enter PIERRE.

Now, sir, where is your master?

Pie. I don't know, sir:—but, indeed, I am very much afraid—

Dar. Afraid!—Of what?—Speak.

Pie. That he'll soon lose his senses, poor gentleman!

Dar. Blockhead!—

Pie. He had such a wild look, when you turn'd away from him in the street just now.—Do, good sir—pardon my boldness—do take this wedding a little into consideration.—

Dar. Silence!—Who were they you were chattering with so busily in the square, about an hour ago?

Pie. In the square?—O! they were strangers.

Dar. How came they to examine, and point at this house so often?

Pie. I don't know, sir;—but one of 'em ask'd me whose that fine house was, and I said it had been the palace of Harancour.—

Dar. You said?.

Pie. Yes, sir';—but that now it belong'd to—

Dar. Babbling dunce!

Pie. I beg your pardon, sir; if I had been a babbler, I should have staid with them; but, no; I got away as fast as I could, that they might ask me no questions about you, sir.

Dar. About me!—And why should you fear any questions being asked about me?

Pie. I'm sure, I don't know, sir.

Dar. Don't know!—Tell me this moment, who put that thought into your head?

Pie. Upon my life, sir, you frighten me out of my wits!—Why, sir, it was—

Dar. Who, who was it?—

Pie. It was you yourself, sir ;—you ordered me not to talk of you, nor your affairs, to any body.

Dar. Well !—And, pray, what pass'd between 'em ?

Pie. They kept that to themselves :—they seem'd to me to talk by signs.

Dar. By signs !—Why talk by signs ?

Pie. I can't tell, sir ; only I guess that the young gentleman was dumb.

Dar. Dumb ?

Pie. He surely was ;—at least, I thought so.

Dar. Dumb !—'Tis false.

Pie. No, indeed ;—you'll find it true, I believe, sir.

Dar. Impossible !—Was it the youth, do you say, that was dumb ?

Pie. Yes, sir, the boy —and I was the more sorry for him, somehow, because he is so very like—

Dar. Like whom ?

Pie. So very like that picture of the young count. And so—

Dar. And so !—And what so !—Officious fool !—isn't the boy dead ?

Pie. So I have heard, sir.

Dar. Heard, reptile !—Do you dare to doubt it ?

Pie. I, sir ? No. Only this morning Dupre said that, perhaps, he was alive.

Dar. When did he say so ?

Pie. While we were looking at the picture.

Dar. (*to himself*) Flames devour the picture !—Let that picture be removed into my apartment.

Pie. Yes, sir.—So I thought, if it should happen to be him, it might turn out to be a lucky discovery :—my master, thinks I—

Dar. Go !—send them to remove that picture.

Pie. Yes, sir.—It's very odd, all this.

[exit

Dar. Here I am countermin'd again. That picture I had painted at the moment of our departure,

in order to impress an opinion of my affection for this boy, and so prevent suspicion. My very precautions work towards my detection.—Like the picture!—dumb!—No, no; it can't be.—And yet—

enter DUPRE, abruptly, having a paper in his hand.

Dar. Now, sir,—who sent for you? What want you here?

Duf. I come, to unburthen a loaded conscience.

Dar. I'm busy, and can't be troubled.

Duf. I come to—(*holding out the paper*)

Dar. Did you hear me? I'm busy.

Duf. Sir, sir, you waste your anger on me: you have laid a crime on my soul, that annihilates the duties and distance of my calling: I cast off the servant, and assume the man.

Dar. What is it you mean by this insolence?

Duf. First, sir, please to take back the annuity you have sent me.

Dar. (*snatches the paper*) Take back! is it not yet sufficient? I thought it beyond your hopes. Your conscience knows its price.

Duf. No, sir; you wrong me; 'twas when I had no conscience, that I had a price.

Dar. Liar! You come to practice on me. You, tattler! gossip of sworn secrets! perjurer! go—point, and pretend to start at pictures—pernicious dotard!—conscience! 'Tis false! No; 'tis to wring my purse you act remorse, and feign this pity for a thing, who, say the best, was but an idiot, an automaton.

Duf. Of me, sir, think what you will; I have deserved it: but, in behalf of that injured youth, I must retort the falsehood.

Dar. You!

Duf. I.—Though speech and hearing were denied him, yet nature recompens'd him with a mind that glow'd with intelligence, and a heart that ran over with benevolence. And you, sir; is your heart so deadened by the injuries you've done him, that you forget it was this idiot saved the life of that most ex-

cellent young man, your only son? Did not Julio, regardless of danger to himself, and thoughtful only of St. Alme, when the fierce wolf had fastened on his throat, did he not bravely rend asunder his bloody jaws, receiving in his own arm a wound, so deep and dangerous, that the scar could never be effaced?

Dar. Silence, I charge you!

Duf. When I call to mind his infancy, his pretty looks, his fond kisses, when I have borne him in my arms, and think how I yielded, weak and wicked as I was, to your temptations, and abandon'd him to perish—poor, helpless babe! in a wide unpitying world,—I could call for curses on my head, proclaim my guilt, and take delight in the abhorrence and punishment, with which men enraged, and the just laws, would pursue me to destruction.

Dar. Hence, raving visionary! The serpent that stung the friend that foster'd him, paid with his life the forfeit of his ingratitude. (*Puts his hand on his sword*) Coward, beware! Shall my honour stand in danger from your treachery?

Duf. Treachery has never enter'd my mind. Julio is gone, and the crime cannot be repaired: yet, the sincere repentance of a servant might claim respect from that master, who, after a blameless life of forty years, had seduc'd him to villany.

Dar. Villany!

Duf. My part was impious villany; what your's was—ask of the vexing thoughts, that nightly take watch on the pillow of the wicked.

Dar. Urge me no further. Lectur'd by my slave! a worm that crawls at the mercy of my foot! Because I have forborne, presum'st thou that I dare not strike? Hence! Here, take thy recompence; (*offering him the paper*) be thankful, and obedient: guard thy lips, or—

Duf. No! Vile as you think me, my silence is not to be bought; my sins shall not be pensioned. Hither-to you are safe: don't let your insults drive me to disclose you.

Dar. Here, here, and have done. (*offering him the paper*)

Dup. You are deceiv'd ; I was brib'd, not by your gold ; but by the wild vanity of sharing your confidence, your familiarity ; and becoming, instead of him you call your slave, your friend.

Dar. Such you might have been.

Dup. No ; there can be no friendship in guilt. 'Tis my doom to live in dread of you, and of my own reflections. 'Tis yours to know, that your honour and life are in the keeping of a man, stung in conscience, distracted in mind, and by yourself render'd a wretch, infamous, and never more to be trusted.

[*exit*

Dar. Indeed ! do you grow so fast on us ? Prevention or treachery—his life or mine—and shall I hesitate ? A single blow will give me peace.—Whither am I going ? Peace !—No, no, 'tis false ; peace dwells only with innocence.—Yet to be led, exposed, a public malefactor ! Help, Heav'n ; shield me from the phrenzy of these thoughts !

[*exit*

SCENE II—FRANVAL's study, as before.

enter MARIANNE.

Mar. Where can Dominique loiter all this while ? When I told him too how anxiously I should wait for his return ! My dear father valued his honest simplicity of heart, and he has liv'd among us so long, and so familiarly indulged, that he treats me with as little ceremony, as if he were guiding me in my leading-strings again.—Ah ! poor fellow ! here he comes, quite out of breath !—I beg his pardon.—

enter DOMINIQUE.

Well ! my good, dear Dominique, have you seen St. Alme ?

Dom. I was coming to tell you, madam.—No, he has not been at home since.

Mar. Unlucky!—Never did I wish so earnestly to see him.

Dom. Lord, Lord, what a pity! Where is he? Where can he be?—Ha! ha! ha!—If he did but know how you are fretting about him, he'd fly on the wings of lo—

Mar. (*interrupting him*) I had forgot:—did you go to the poor widow?

Dom. Yes, sure, ma'am; and gave her your present. Ha! ha! poor Claudine! She kiss'd the crowns because they had touch'd your hands, and blest your sweet name a thousand and a thousand times.

Mar. Surely you didn't tell her that it came from me?

Dom. Lord, ma'am, I couldn't help it! To be sure, nobody, though I say it myself, can keep a secret better than I can: but then—Ha! ha! poor soul!—she begg'd, and pray'd, and laugh'd, and cried—Ha! ha! I reckon she'll be here in a minute to thank you.

Mar. I can't see her, Dominique:—I'm too much disturb'd; I'm not—it was very wrong, indeed.—

Dom. Well, then, she shan't come. And yet, why should you be so ashamed of doing good? I'm sure, virtue should have somebody to show it a little countenance now-a-days. Ah, poor Claudine! Times are sadly chang'd with her since her good-man, Blaise, was porter at the palace of Harancour: she wanted for nothing then.—Ah! when count Julio died, his uncle, Darlemont, turn'd away all the old servants; and, but for the charity of his son, I believe, some of them might have starved, poor things! He has been very good to Claudine, too, and would have done more, but for fear of his father.

Mar. Yes; the father is unlike the son.—

Dom. Unlike! the one is as proud as the—; and the other as mild as a May-morning. O, he'd make an admirable master for one, he would; an

excellent head of a family ; and, above all, a most charming spouse.—Don't you think so, ma'am ?

Mar. Yes, I believe the woman of his choice,—

Dom. That's done. His choice is made.

Mar. I've heard he's to be married to the great heiress, the president's daughter.

Dom. So have I.

Mar. Have you ?

Dom. Yes ;—Ha ! ha ! ha !—But he won't have her.

Mar. Dominique !

Dom. Lord, ma'am, you know very well he loves somebody else.

Mar. (*much agitated*) Are the apartments ready for our two guests ?

Dom. I can do that in a minute, ma'am.—Yes, yes, he——

Mar. Go, go ; make haste ; they are expected every instant. Go.

Dom. Well, well ; I'm gone. (*aside*) No, never can make her own it. Ah ! you cunning little hypocrite ! ha ! ha !—A girl in love is for all the world like the moon in a cloudy night ; now out, now in : this moment clear as the day ; and the next you're all in the dark again. [exit

Mar. One would think that this old man took a pleasure in tormenting me. If this scholar of Del'Epee's should prove to be count Julio, and recover the possessions he has been depriv'd of, St. Alme would then be only the equal of my fortune ; and his father no longer, perhaps, see any distance between us.—Ah, flattering hope, you are too forward.

SONG.

Written by M. G. Lewis, Esq. Composed by Mr. Kelly.

What, tho' fate forbids me offer
Golden gifts from fortune's store ;

All I have to love I proffer,
Fortune cannot offer more.

What, tho' bright the jewell'd treasure,
Which Peruvian mines supply ;
Brighter still the tear of pleasure,
Sparkling in affection's eye.

Hymen, in his power for ever,
Firm the God of Hearts would hold ;
Binding oft---ah, vain endeavour !
Love with Interest's chains of gold.

Soon their weight his strength o'erpowers ;
Soon they crush the petty elf ;
Love can bear no chains but flowers,
Light, and blooming like himself.

Mar. Ah me ! Why is St. Alme out of the way ?
He must be prepared for this discovery.—And yet,
my mother ! should Darlemont be softened, will she
consent ?

enter MADAME FRANVAL and FRANVAL.

Mad. F. Don't tell me, son ; don't tell me. This
is my opinion ;—to hesitate to deliver up this usurper
to the vengeance of the laws, to wink at such enor-
mities, is to become an accomplice in 'em.

Fran. You will allow us first to prove them on him,
madam ; besides, can I forget, that he is the father
of my friend ? (*madame Franval turns away in
great displeasure*) Has Dominique been to St.
Alme ? (to Marianne)

Mar. Yes ; but he hadn't been at home.

Mad. F. (comes down between them) And to tell you my opinion further, son, after this letter, I very much disapprove of that young man's visits here.

Fran. Ought we to make him responsible for his father's faults ?

Mar. Which he is so far from sharing, that he will devote his life to atone 'em. (*madame Franval gives her a look of disapprobation*) One need only look in his face, to be sure of it !

Mad. F. Oh ! had the seneschal been living now !

Fran. If only Darlemont were concerned, madam, I should without regret tear away his specious visor, and expose him bare-faced : but such are the prejudices of the world, that I cannot publish the guilt of the parent, without reflecting the disgrace of his actions on his blameless son.

Mad. F. What, then, he is to escape after all ?

Fran. Here's somebody coming. My dear madam—

Mar. Good mother—

Mad. F. Nay, nay—

enter DEL'EPEE, introducing THEODORE.

Del'E. In obedience to your kind commands, I present to you my adopted child, my Theodore. This, sir, is the orphan whose story you have heard, and whose wrongs you will redress.

(*Theodore, having saluted them with great vivacity, fixes his eyes, on Franval.*)

Mar. How intelligent and animated a look.

Mad. F. The perfect image of his late father !

Del'E. (earnestly) Do you say so, madam !

Mad. F. I see his father in him at his age, as if he stood before me.

(*Theodore, to whom Del'Epee is attentive, points to Franyal — Lays the fore-finger of his right hand on his forehead, and assumes an expression of genius ; then darts his arm forward with force, grandeur, &c.*)

Del'E. Ay ! He tells me, that he reads in your countenance the certainty of triumphing and confounding his oppressor.

Fran. Yes ; I have given him my promise, and will perform it.

(Theodore, having touched his lips with a look of regret, seizes the hand of Franval—holds it to his heart; and, with his other hand, beats quickly and often on the bosom of Franval.)

Del'E. Ah ! that he could speak his gratitude ! But, by the throbings of his heart, he bids you learn, that your goodness to him will live there for ever. These are his true expressions.

Fran. Are you then so perfectly comprehensible to each other ?

Mad. F. Are your signs so minutely accurate ?

Del'E. As speech itself.

Mar. And does he understand every thing you desire to express ?

Del'E. You shall have proof of it this moment.

(*Del'Epee* taps Theodore on the shoulder, to make him observe—rubs his forehead, then points to Marianne, and writes a line or two with his finger on the palm of his left hand. Theodore nods to *Del'Epee*—runs to Franval's table—sits down, snatches up a pen, and shews that he is ready to write .

Del'E. Now, madam, make what enquiry you please of him, he will copy it down from my action, and immediately give you his reply. He waits for you.

Mar. (with timidity) I really don't know what to—

Fran. Any thing ! Any thing !

Mad. F. Ay, ay, child ; the first thing that comes into your head.

Mar. (after a moment's reflection) In your opinion—

Del'E. Speak slowly, and repeat the question, as if you were dictating to him yourself.

(Theodore expresses that he attends to *Del'Epee's* signs.)

Mar. In your opinion—

Del'E. (makes a sign.)

(Theodore writes.)

Mar. Who is the greatest genius,—

Del'E. (makes a sign.)

(Theodore writes.)

Mar. That France has ever produced ?

Del'E. (makes a sign.)

(Theodore writes.)

Del'E. (takes the paper from the table and shews it to Franval) You see he has written the question distinctly.

(*Del'Epee returns the paper to Theodore, who for a moment sits motionless and meditating.*)

Mar. He seems a little at a loss.

Del'E. I don't wonder at it ; it's a delicate question.

(*Theodore starts from his reverie, looks affectionately at Del'Epee, wipes his eyes, and writes with the utmost rapidity.*)

Fran. Look, look, what fire sparkles in his eyes ? What animation in every turn ! I dare promise you this will be the answer of a feeling heart, and an enlightened mind.

(*Theodore starts up, presents the paper to Marianne, and desires her to read it to the company. Madame Franval and Franval look eagerly over Marianne, as she reads ; Theodore runs to Del'Epee, and looks at him with fond curiosity.*)

Mar. (reads) "In your opinion, who is the greatest genius that France has ever produced?"

Mad. F. Ay, what does he say to that ?

Mar. (reads) "Science would decide for *D'Alembert*, and Nature say, *Buffon* ; Wit and Taste present *Voltaire* ; and Sentiment pleads for *Rousseau* ; but Genius and Humanity cry out for *Del'Epee* ; and him I call the best and greatest of all human creatures."

(Marianne drops the paper, and retires to a chair in tears.)

(Theodore throws himself into Del'Epees arms.

M. Franval and Franval look at each other in astonishment!)

Del'E. (with an emotion which he strives to refresh) You must excuse him; 'tis a great mistake; but a very, very pardonable one.

Fran. (takes up the paper, and examines it) I can hardly credit what I see.

Mad. F. What do you think of this Darlemont now?

(Theodore and mad. Franval go to Marianne.)

Fran. This decision discovers an extent of acquirements, and shews a purity of taste, that——

(to Del'Epee) What study, what pains, must it have cost you to accomplish such effects.

Del'E. To tell you what it has cost me, were impossible; but the bare thought of prompting to the forgetfulness of nature, of calling forth the faculties of mind, this one persuasion gives strength, courage, and perseverance to accomplish miracles. If the laborious husbandman, when he views rich harvests waving over the lands he has fertilized, experiences a pleasure proportioned to his toils, judge what are my sensations, when, surrounded by my pupils, I watch them gradually emerging from the night that overshadows them, and see them dazzled at the widening dawn of opening Deity, 'till the full blaze of perfect intellect informs their souls to hope and adoration. This is to new-create our brethren. What transport to bring man acquainted with himself! Enjoyments, I own, there may be, more splendid, more alluring; but I am sure, that in the wide round of our capacities, none will be found more true.

Fran. They're but the just reward of such benevolence: and if my efforts——

CLAUDINE and DOMINIQUE, without.

Dom. Come back, come back ; I tell you, *Claudine*, you can't see her.

Clau. I tell you, I must and will see her, if I search the whole house after her.

(*Theodore, Madame Franval, and Marianne come forward*)

enter CLAUDINE, followed by DOMINIQUE.

Clau. (to *madame Franval*) I beg pardon for being so bold,—

Dom. (to *Marianne*) She slipp'd by, the back way, and got the start of me.

(*Theodore, on the entrance of Claudine, appears struck with recollection of her ; then falls into the most lively agitation ; and signifies to Del'Epee, that she was wife to the porter of the house he lived in, and had been his nurse.* Del'Epee answers him in signs of surprise and joy.)

Clau. (to *Franval*) Sir, I beg pardon ; but, when the heart is full—This dear young lady has been so good— [kisses *Marianne's hand*.]

Mad.F. What does all this mean, *Marianne* ?

Mar. (*hesitating*) Madam—

Clau. Sweet saint ! She blushes to speak her own good deeds. Ah, madam, this angel of a girl heard I was in distress, and has been of a long time my benefactress ; I never knew what charitable hand was stretch'd to me, till this morning *Dominique* told me—

Dom. No, I didn't tell you ; you coax'd it out of me. Come away, come away. You're a rare one to keep a secret ! [signs to her to begone]

Del'E. Good woman ! good woman !

Clau. Me, sir ? (*courtseying*)

Del'E. You liv'd formerly at the palace of Harancour ?

Clau. My husband was porter there nine and twenty years.

Del'E. Do you remember young count Julio, your late master's son ?

Clau. Remember him ? I had him in my arms the very hour he was born. My lady died in child-bed : I was his nurse,—his mother, begging your pardon, I may say,—and a sweet babe he was. I shall never forget him. His death was a hard pinch to us all.

. (*weeping*)

(Theodore gazes on Claudine, in great agitation.)

Del'E. (*takes Theodore by the hand*) Did you ever see this face ?

Clau. (*starting*) Merciful goodness ! why, sure—
(Theodore flings back the hair from his forehead, &c.)

Clau. It is, it is he ; it is young count Julio, himself !

(Theodore, as she runs to him, and is falling at his feet, immediately prevents, and kisses her.)

Dom. Ha ! ha ! and there I had like not to have let her in.

Del'E. Providential encounter !

Fran. This may lead to other proofs,—

Mad. F. And confound the insolent Darlemont.—Now, son !

Clau. If my poor Blaise were but alive ! But where has he been,—the dear boy ? Where has he—

Del'E. Hush ! recollect yourself : are you so thoroughly convinced that this is Julio of Harancour, that you dare solemnly attest it ?

Clau. To the whole world—to men and angels—earth and heaven.

Fran. Can't you immediately, without letting 'em know what has pass'd, bring hither some others of the servants, who knew count Julio in his infancy ?

Clau. To be sure : there's the coachman's widow living still ; and there's —

Dom. Ay, so there is ; and there's Denys the groom besides, and his old wife,—they don't live far off.

Mad. F. Fetch 'em this moment—fetch 'em all.
Dom. Come along, Claudine ; come along.

[*going*

Fran. And,—not a word, for your lives.

Dom. Oh ! I know better than to chatter about what doesn't concern me. Long live count Julio !

Fran. Dominique,—

Dom. Oh !—come along, Claudine.

{*exeunt* Dominique and Claudine.}

Mad. F. There, there ; make haste, make haste !

Mar. My dear madam, if they should discover—

Mad. F. Daughter, daughter, he must be punish'd for his ambition ; his insolence must be humbled. Son, we'll leave you together. Come, we'll shew the count of Harancour his apartment. (*signs to Theodore to go with her ; he takes her hand*)

[*exeunt* madame Franval *very ceremoniously* ; Theodore *nodding to Del'Epee* ; Marianne, with an imploring look to Franval.]

Fran. I have already told you, the friendship that binds me to St. Alme, imposes on me the duty of proceeding by the gentlest steps. I now propose, that we present ourselves at the palace of Harancour : there, jointly, and in private, we may attack this Darlemont ; you, with the energy so good a cause inspires ; and I, with all the terror of the laws. He must be more hardened and audacious than I think him, if he can withstand us.

Del'E. I agree : and a thought this instant strikes me, which, if he is not quite a monster, must ensure our success.

{*exeunt*

ACT IV.

SCENE I—*the room in the palace of Harancour, the picture being removed.*

enter DARLEMONT and PIERRE.

Dar. Go, and enquire immediately.

[*exit Pierre*

Vain, groundless apprehensions, leave me ! What an absurd propensity there is in man to be his own tormentor ; to conjure up the wildest visions ; to fancy the most frightful accidents ; and shake the more, the more preposterous the terrors are which his imagination creates !

enter PIERRE.

Pie. Sir, my master is not come in yet.

Dar. I suppose, he's at Franval's then.

Pie. No, sir, he's not ; they sent here just now to enquire for him.

Dar. (*aside*) My son opposing all my wishes ; my servant ready to betray me ; whom can I trust in ? My ambition is my curse ; the moment I attain'd its object my plagues began. Where is Dupre ?

Pie. Shut up in his own room.

Dar. (*alarmed*) Is any body with him ?

Pie. No, sir.

Dar. Are you sure of it ?

Pie. Sir, I saw him go in alone, and heard the door lock. (*going*)

Dar. Well !—Pierre,—

PIERRE returns.

Have you seen any thing more of these—

Pie. What, the strangers, sir ?

Dar. So very like the——No, nothing.—You may go. [*exit Pierre*

Dumb ! Like the picture ! Should he be still alive,

should some infernal accident have return'd him hither,—well, how will he prove his story? His death is register'd: that testimony no evidence but Dupre's can now invalidate; and him, too, I might set at defiance, and be at rest for ever, could I but link my interest to the president's by this marriage with his daughter; that would place me beyond the reach of danger.

enter ST. ALME, who stands at a distance, as if not daring to approach his father.

I am on the rack, till it is accomplish'd.

St. A. Am I permitted, sir,——

Dar. (*alarmed*) Who's there?

St. A. I was told, you wish'd to see me.

Dar. I do; and let me warn you, sir, that, unless you come resolved to shew a proper sense of duty to your father, you have heard that wish for the last time. Tell me, where have you been all this morning?

St. A. My father, it is not in my nature to dissemble with you; I come from the president's.

Dar. (*startled*) Ha! What was your business there, and without me?

St. A. To lay open my whole soul before him; to acquaint him from my own lips with my engagements to Marianne. (*Darlemont starts*) Pardon me, sir——O, think how resistless must be the power that overmasters me, since it could hurry me to make this declaration, even at the risk of your displeasure.

Dar. (*stifling his rage*) Well, sir; what was his answer?

St. A. Noble, kind, and like himself. He gently told me, it would have been the pride of his heart, and the comfort of his declining years, to have seen me happy with his daughter; but that the choice I had made did me honour,——

Dar. (*gradually giving way to his fury*) How?

St. A. And that the ties by which I was engag'd to so worthy an object must be indissoluble.

Dar. (*bursting out*) Parricide ! You have undone me. Vain, empty schemes of human-foresight ! I possess myself of my ne———of a vast inheritance ; I devote it to your advancement ; employ it to ally you with the most powerful and wealthy family in Languedoc ; and, when I have succeeded in removing every prejudice, every obstacle, you dare to make a mockery of my solicitudes, and audaciously reject power, rank, fortune, for the interested attractions of a beggar, the seductive arts of a———

St. A. O, no : that she has fix'd me hers, and hers alone, 'tis true : but, sir, 'twas without artifice, as it was without design : her enchanting loveliness, my father ; her innocence, if possible, still more lovely ; these are the seductions, these the arts, this virtuous girl has practis'd on me.

Dar. (*bursting into tears*) Short-sighted, foolish parents ! for thankless children, thus to plunge yourselves in guilt and danger.

St. A. O, sir ! (*affectionately*) Surely, you are in no danger.

Dar. (*resolutely*) No ! I don't know what I am. Yet, should the world once suspect—

St. A. Who can live fairer in the opinion of the world ?

Dar. He who lives fair in his own mind.

St. A. For Heaven's sake, sir, what labours in your bosom ?

Dar. O, misery ! to think I have a son, and want a friend !

St. A. You rend my heart with these doubts. Honour me as a friend ; shew me how I may serve my father ; and let man and Heaven renounce me, if I forget the duty of a son !

Dar. (*eagerly*) Do you speak this from your soul ? May I depend on you ?

St. A. Can it be a question, sir?

Dar. (*solemn and earnest*) Then, return to the president,—

St. A. Ha!

Dar. Retrieve the mischief; apologize, plead, obtain his daughter.

St. A. Sir!—

Dar. If you have the affection of a son; if you value the safety, life, and honour of your father; go!

St. A. Your agitation terrifies me. Tell me, I conjure you, tell me the cause of it.

Dar. Impossible! Think, 'tis no trivial cause that could induce me to plead by dark hints for a son's obedience.

St. A. Speak, sir; O, speak!

Dar. It is not to be told. Nothing but the support of rank, wealth, office, can secure me: the gulf of ruin gapes at my feet; I call on my son,—him to whom I have given life,—for whom I have risk'd life, infamy, and perdition.—I once more call on him:—save me, or never see me more. [exit

St. A. Such guilt! Such danger! Can this be real? Impossible! 'Tis but a cruel artifice to extort my consent to this hated marriage. Unkind father! Thus, with suborn'd emotions, to practise on the affections of a son, who would die for you.

enter PIERRE.

Pie. Sir, sir, the porter says, Dominique was here just now in a great hurry to ask for you.

St. A. I come.—Yes, Franval; my friend, my brother! your advice and assistance are the only reliance left me. [exit

Pie. And now for a little chat with Dupre about this picture. [exit

SCENE III—*Franval's study as before.*

enter MADAME FRANVAL, MARIANNE, DEL'EPEE,
and FRANVAL, with a paper in his hand.

Mad. F. Bless my soul ! Where can they be ?—
No news of these witnesses yet ?

Del'E. We must have patience, madame.

Mad. F. This Dominique is so slow.

Fran. (*to Del'Epee*) How severe is the duty you
have imposed on me ! Must I present the accusation
of the father of St. Alme ? My heart bleeds at the
thought !

Del'E. Would he had been less criminal, and
Theodore less injur'd !

Mad. F. No, no ; his punishment cannot be too
sudden, nor too public.

Fran. Think of his virtuous son.

Mar. (*with the utmost tenderness*) Who, innocent
of his crimes, would share in his disgrace.

Del'E. Besides, madam, we must remember that
he still is my poor boy's uncle ; his mother's brother.

Mad. F. How the count of Harancour could stoop
to marry into such a family,—and then, to make this
wretch his eventual heir !

Del'E. Integrity and honour, it may be, govern'd
his life, till this temptation overpower'd him ; at
least, under that persuasion, madam, I would first try,
whether he mayn't still be reclaimable by lenient
means.

Fran. On that I am fix'd.

Mad. F. Remember, I tell you, he'll treat all your
sentiments, and your lenient means with contempt.

enter ST. ALME in the deepest dejection.

Fran. Then madam,—St. Alme ! I wish'd to
see you. (*he goes to St. Alme, and they talk together*)

Del'E. Is this his son ? (*to Marianne*)

Mar. Yes, sir.

Mad. F. Daughter ! .

[exit Madame Franval, looking disdainfully at St. Alme]

Mar. (to Del'Epee) O, sir, speak with him ; acquaint yourself with the virtues of his heart, then ask your own, whether ignominy be his desert !

[exit Marianne, in tears

Fran. (to Del'Epee) My friend requests a moment's conversation.

Del'E. Honour and persuasion sit on his brow ; trust him at once : his father will never be able to resist him.

Fran. You judge him by yourself.

Del'E. Try every thing. Theodore shall know that his cousin is here. [exit

Fran. St. Alme, why are your looks so sad !

St. A. My distresses double every moment, and are inexplicable. The stern reserve, in which my father has so long wrapp'd himself, is suddenly chang'd to terrors that distract him.

Fran. (aside) Indeed !

St. A. The horror of his thoughts seems agonizing. To me he appeals for safety ; yet mysteriously hides from me the cause of his alarm : by the sacred names of son and friend, with prayers, with tears, and solemn warnings, I am adjured to shield a father from perdition.

Fran. (aside) Surely he can't have heard—What are the means ?

St. A. The means ? The sacrifice of friendship, happiness, and love. O, Heaven, can this be just ? And yet, he is my father.

Fran. Ay, would he were not !

St. A. Hold, hold, Franval.—If you are my friend, no wish like that.

Fran. I am your friend ; and have an office to discharge, that might better suit your bitterest enemy.

St. A. No word against my father ; or, here for ever—

Fran. Be calm, and hear me. You had a cousin, Julio, count of Harancour.

St. A. You know I had.

Fran. St. Alme, I can't proceed ; I cannot tell you ; yet you must know it, for all your sakes.

St. A. Speak out at once.

Fran. I want the courage to reveal it.

St. A. Speak ! What of Julio ?

Fran. You lov'd him.

St. A. Dearly as my own life.

Fran. You would not see him wrong'd.

St. A. What mean you ? Wrong'd ! Who wrongs him ? 'Tis eight years and more, since Julio died in Paris.

Fran. Ay, in the report of guilt.

St. A. Sir ! In the report of my father. Guilt ? In the report of Darlemont. Wrong'd ! He died in Paris.

Fran. No, no.

St. A. Whither would these dark insinuations tend ? Merciful Heaven, add not to my miseries, that of hating the brother of Marianne ! Julio—

Fran. Is still alive.

St. A. Franval, you are deceived ; the attestation of his death is in my father's hand ; Dupre was present in his last moments, and is a surviving witness to it.

Fran. Indeed ? Then let your own eyes judge between us. Look, who comes here. Darlemont declares count Julio dead ;—I, Franval, present him living. There—

enter THEODORE and DEL'EPEE.

St. A. All-gracious Heaven ! Do my eyes deceive me ? Risen from the dead ! It is, it is—
(Theodore, after they have gazed a moment on each

other, utters a shriek of joy, and rushes into St. Alme's arms.

Del'E. No, you are not deceived. He calls you friend ; he speaks to you in smiles and tears, the language of the heart ; his only language.

St. A. Can this be real ? I know not yet—Speechless !—it must, it must be he ; my long lost, dear, lamented Julio !—And yet, stand off awhile, and let me gaze till I have satisfied my doubts.

(*Theodore, afflicted at St. Alme's putting him away, hastily recollects himself, bares his right arm, and points to the scar upon it.—St. Alme bursting into tears, runs to him, and kisses the scar.*)

St. A. That scar !

Del'E. O nature, nature, how resistless is thy eloquence !

Fran. St. Alme, compose yourself. I shudder for the final close of this discovery.

St. A. It is, it is my Julio. Friend ! companion ! preserver of my life ! I'm lost in joy and wonder.—To whom are we indebted for this strange blessing ?

Fran. To him ; to the benevolence of Del'Epee.

St. A. Del'Epee ! Has Julio been an object of your generous pity ? O, sir,—I can't thank you. (*kisses Del'Epee's hand*) Come, come, my dear Julio,—(*to Del'Epee*) my father's gratitude shall bless you.—How will *he* rejoice at this event ! Let us haste to him ; he has been much altered since your loss ; your presence shall dispel all gloom, and his heart dance with transport to behold you.

[*Madam Franval and Dupre within.*]

Mad. F. (within) Come in, come in, Dupre ; he's here ; it's all true.

Fran. Dupre ! (*looking at St. Alme*)

Duf. (*within*) Where is he ? Let me see him, let me see him !

enter MADAME FRANVAL and DUPRE.

Fran. How has he learned—

Dup. No,—Pierre was not mistaken. O, Julio, Julio! (*throws himself at Theodore's feet.*)

Mad. F. We expect the other servants every moment.

St. A. All overjoyed to hear of his return.

(*Theodore instantly recollects Dupre, shrinks from him, and explains to Del'Epee who he is.*)

Dup. Now I have seen him once again, let me but ask forgiveness, and expire at his feet.

Del'E. (to *St. A.*) This man seems strangely agitated.

St. A. Forgiveness! What does he mean? He was his favourite servant, and attended Julio, when my father carried him to Paris.

Dup. (starting up) Yes, I am that ungrateful viper; that villain who became the accomplice of an act—He lives, however, and I can now substantiate the truth. Drag me away; I am ready. Deliver me and my seducer to the just punishment of our crimes.

Del'E. You went with him to Paris, about eight years ago.

Dup. Yes, yes; with Darlemont, with Darlemont!

St. A. With Darlemont! What then?

Fran. St. Alme! St. Alme!

St. A. Rack me not thus, but speak.

Dup. I must; and may my true confession and remorse find acceptance there towards the remission of my guilt!

Del'E. Be but sincere, it will. Go on.

Dup. The very evening we reached Paris, your father, pointing to a small trunk, sternly ordered me to dress his nephew in those clothes. It contained a beggar's wretched covering.

(*St. Alme starts back, and turns away a moment, hiding his face.*)

Mad. F. The very rags they brought him to you in.

Duf. Muffled in these tatters, shrouded by midnight darkness, my master hurried him away ; and, till this moment, I never saw him more.

St. A. Strike me with deafness, heaven !

Mad. F. Why didn't you immediately accuse him ? He might have murdered the poor child for aught you knew.

Duf. At first I fear'd it. Press'd and overpower'd by my suspicions on his return alone, he owned that he had put in execution the design which brought him to Paris, and, under shelter of the night, had lost the disguised and helpless innocent beyond recovery, in the inextricable mazes of that wide city.

Mad. F. Thank heaven, he'll find himself disappointed, and detected !

Del'E. Madam,—Well, sir ?—

Duf. In order to possess himself of the estates of the young count, it still was necessary that he should prove his death. Two witnesses were wanting : seduced by gold, one, since dead, was the poor wretch we lodg'd with.

Fran. The other—was yourself : and by this dark and perjur'd attestation——

St. A. His name annihilated, his rich inheritance purloin'd, his death a forgery, and my own father the perpetrator ! Saints of heaven, guard my soul from desperation ! Already the licentious rabble point at me as I pass. I hear them cry, There goes the monster, the unnatural villain, who conspir'd to rob his noble kinsman, the friend of his youth, the saviour of his life, and turn'd him forth, naked and speechless, on a desert and unpitying world !

Del'E. Listen, sir : listen for a moment to a stranger, who views the dignity of your sorrow with reverence, and the severity of your fate with compassion : be just to yourself, you are not guilty.

St. A. Compassion ! O heaven Am I not his

son ? Not guilty ? I'll hear of no compassion. Proclaim our crimes : clothe us in the same infamy ; overwhelm us in one common ruin ; raise monuments to perpetuate the villainy of the house of Darlemon ; let the name be recorded as pestilential to virtue, and the race exterminated from the world for ever !

(St. Alme throws himself in an agony on a chair. Theodore, to whom Del'Epee has explained Dupre's confession, endeavours by every means to console him.)

Dup. Since that fatal deed, my horror and remorse have never given me one moment's peace. But Heaven is just ; it has preserv'd this noble youth, and sends me to unload my conscience at the tribunal of the laws. Deliver me this moment to them. I know the punishment that awaits me, and am resign'd to it ; too blest at last, if in confessing and expiating the crimes to which I have been an accomplice, I can repair the evils they have caus'd.

St. A. (starting up, as if with a sudden thought, and rushing forward between Del'Epee and Franval) Yes, yes ; they must be repair'd. Follow me, wretched old man.

Fran. (holding him) St. Alme, where are you going ?

St. A. Where despair calls me.

Del'E. (holding him) Look on your Julio.

St. A. The sight of him drives me to madness.

Fran. What is your design ?

St. A. (bursting from them) To avenge him, or die. Come, villain.

[exit St. Alme, seizing Dupre, and dragging him away with him. Dupre looking back on Theodore.

Fran. I must follow, and detain him ; or, in this madness of conflicting passions, he may publish his father's crimes, and defeat our very hopes to save him from such dishonour.

Mad. F. We follow you. Well, this St. Alme is a very good young man, upon my word ; and,

though he is Darlemont's son, I can't help being concerned for him, I protest.

Del'E. Franval speaks highly of his virtues and his honour. Ah ! thou poor reed, shaken so long by storms ! How this eventful day may end for thee, Heaven knows ! But come, my Theodore,—should an unfeeling uncle persist in renouncing thee, should the laws reject thy appeal, thou shalt still find a warm, though humble, asylum, in the affection of Del'Epee.

[*exeunt*



ACT V.

SCENE I—*The room in the palace of Harancour.—The picture having been removed.*

enter PHILIPPE, PIERRE, CHARLES, and ETIENNE.

Pie. Nay, nay, don't be in such a hurry. Friends ! fellow-servants ! What have I done ? what have I done ?

Phil. Nay, nay ; no hanging back : you must come to my master.

Cha. Come along ; come along.

Pie. Let me go, I say. I am coming along ; but you have a mind to strangle me before I get there. Hands off, gentlemen ! (*disengages himself from them*) I won't be dragged in this manner, like a lamb to a slaughter-house. What's the meaning of all this ? What's the matter, I say ?

Phil. O, poor innocent creature ! You'll know what the matter is sooner than you desire, I fancy. You must always act the great man ; you must affect to be in all your young master's secrets !

Pie. I ! I wish I may be hanged if I know any of his secrets.

Eti. Ay, ay ; so you say. You call us wretched plodders, you know. What do you think of us now ? My master has been in a fine rage about you and Dupre : you must be tattling.

Pie. Tattling?

Eti. Ay: you have been telling Dupre something or other.

Pie. Me! Upon my soul I——

Phil. Well, well, it doesn't signify; whatever it was, it drove Dupre into the square, raving like a madman, and my master has been raving ever since. He has almost murdered the porter, I can tell you, for letting Dupre out,—against his express orders, it seems.

Pie. Letting him out! And why not? Where is he gone?

Eti. I fancy, that's the very thing my master wishes to know.

Pie. Is it? I'm sure then he wishes to know more than I can tell him.

Phil. Ay, ay, that's your business; but he'll find a way to make you tell him, I believe.

Pie. Make me tell! None of your impertinence, if you please, sir.

Eti. Don't make a fool of yourself, but come quietly with us: we shall all be finely handled for staying so long.

Pie. Handled, indeed! Come, I like that too!—handled!

Phil. Don't be too flippant, friend Pierre; he's in a most unmerciful humour, I promise you. Come——

Pie. This is all about that confounded picture, I suppose. My cursed curiosity will be the ruin of me at last.

Phil. Eti. Cha. Come away! come away!

Phi. Well, well; friends, fellow-servants, gentlemen!
[exit]

SCENE II—*a saloon in the palace of Harancour, in which the picture is now placed.*

enter DARLEMONT.

Dar. Doubt ! horror ! and distraction ! Where now can I look for support ? my son estranged from me ! Dupre a fugitive ! All torments that disobedience, treachery, and self-condemnation can conjure up, beleaguer and confound me. (*a noise without*)

enter PHILIPPE.

Now, sir ?

Phil. We have brought him, sir ; Pierre is at the door.

Dar. So ! he's in the plot too. Bring him in.—(*exit PHILIPPE*) Down, thronging apprehensions, down ! I shall betray myself.

enter PIERRE, PHILIPPE, ETIENNE, and CHARLES.

Tell me, sirrah ! whither is he fled ?

Pie. Fled, sir ! Who, sir ?

Dar. No prevarication, rascal !—the hypocritical compoter of your schemes.—Speak !—Dupre,—where is he ?

Pie. If you'll believe me, sir, I can't tell.

Dar. I'll not believe you, villain ! I'll have the truth, though I tear it out of your heart. I know you went to him into his room : deny that too.

Pie. Went to him in his—Yes, yes, I did, I believe,—I did, sir.

Dar. (*seizing him*) What was your business with him, then ?

Pie. (*very much frightened*) As I hope for mercy, sir, I only went, after you order'd me to take away the young count's picture, just to—

Dar. (*fiercely*) Go ; I'll call you when I have done with him.

[*exeunt Philippe, Etienne, and Charles.*—*Darlemont pulls to the door very violently.*]

Pie. Sir, I see, I have done something that alarms you,—

Dar. Alarms me !

Pie. That displeases you ; I read it in your looks : but what it is, I protest I know no more, than' I do what is become of Dupre.

Dar. (*having composed himself*) I'm not displeas'd; you are mistaken. Come, tell me honestly what pass'd between you.

Pie. Why, nothing, sir : only at first, when I said something about your bidding me remove the picture, he shook his head, with a deep groan. So, to spirit him up a little, I told him,—as I told you, sir,—that I had seen a young gentleman in the morning, a stranger, who seem'd deaf and dumb too, as like that picture, as if he had sat for it.

Dar. (*very eagerly*) What did he say to that ?

Pie. Not one single word, sir ; but all the blood flew into his face in a moment, and he sunk on the table weeping bitterly ; then he wav'd his hand so,—and I left him.

Dar. (*aside*) Ha ! he has revealed nothing yet.— You have seen nothing of him since, then ?

Pie. No, sir.

Dar. Nor of the strangers ?

Pie. Nothing, sir.

Dar. Leave me. (*in deep thought*)

Pie. (*aside*) And glad to be so cheaply quit too. What is the meaning of all this rout ? I durst not own that I told Dupre the strangers were at Franval's. (*going*)

Dar. And stay within call. [exit Pierre
I know not what to think, nor what course to take.
Is this fellow's account true, or false ? am I betray'd,
or not ? nor dare I tax him too closely ; that would
excite suspicion. Horrible uncertainty ! O, let no
man ever trust himself into the path of guilt ! It is a
labyrinth beset with dismay and remorse, and not to
be retrod without a miracle ! Yet, I think—for his

own sake, I think Dupre will not divulge me. No, no, this sudden start is but the restlessness of his sickly conscience.

re-enter PIERRE.

Pie. Sir, the advocate Franval begs the favour of a few moments private conversation with you.

Dar. Franval!—With me or with my son?

Pie. With you, he said, sir.

Dar. Tell him, I beg his pardon, I'm particularly engaged. [exit Pierre

He comes to torture me on *his* side ; to prattle to me of his sister, and the match they have so craftily settled with St. Alme : but I shall counterwork their project. My son is good and dutiful, and loves me ; and, though he could withstand my commands, I know he can't long be proof to my entreaties ; and the alliance I have provided, is the only imaginable means of securing me and himself against all turns of fortune.

re-enter PIERRE.

Pie. I beg pardon, sir ; the advocate Franval has sent me back to inform you, that he has immediate business of the last importance, and that the abbe Del'Epee, from Paris, is with him.

Dar. (*starts*) Who?

Pie. The abbe Del'Epee.

Dar. What ! the instructor of the deaf and dumb ?

Pie. I don't know, sir ; but I dare say it is ; for its the very gentleman that stopp'd me with the young stranger in the square this morning.

Dar. (*having paced once or twice across the room in great agitation*) Desire 'em to walk up. [exit Pierre He in Toulouse ! accompanied by a youth,—speaking by signs,—pointing out this house,—and like the picture ! I'll not believe it. What ! after so many years ? Yet, wherefore should this very man address himself to me ? I must command myself ; and

by a firm and calm exterior baffle the keenest scrutiny of suspicion. I hear 'em. Be their errand what it may, my resolution's fixed : Defiance is a champion whose vigour may be dreaded ; but Fear, a recreant destin'd to fall by the very sword which he surrenders. 'They come : I must withdraw one moment.

[exit

re-enter PIERRE, introducing FRANVAL and DE-L'EPEE.—PIERRE sets chairs, and exit.

Fran. Pray, sir, remember ; not one word of Dupre. I know him well ; to find his servant his accuser, would rouse his pride to fury, and render all our endeavours to serve him, and in him, my friend, ineffectual. No hint of Dupre's evidence, unless he absolutely drives us to desperate measures, I beg.

Del'E. I shall observe.

re-enter DARLEMONT.

(*Darlemont and Del'Epee eye each other stedfastly —Franval presents Del'Epee.*)

Del'E. Your servant, sir.

(*Darlemont bows to them, points to the chairs, and they all sit —Darlemont in the midst, evidently struggling with his alarm*)

Dar. You desire, I am told, to speak with me in private. May I ask what motive ?—

Del'E. The deep interest we both take in the honour of the father of St. Alme, and the solemn obligation we are at the same time under to fulfil an act of justice,—these, sir, are the motives on which we judg'd it proper to request this interview in private.

Dar. (*embarrassed*) Does any man suppose my honour then in question ?

Fran. A moment's patience, sir.

Del'E. You are the uncle, and were left the guardian of Julio, count of Harancour.

Dar. (*shocked*) Well, sir ?

Del'E. Of that unhappy youth, who was depriv'd by death of the watchful affection of his parents, and by nature left destitute of that distinctive prerogative of man, the power of appealing against injustice and oppression !

Dar. (*haughtily*) Oppression ? Sir !

Del'E. Ho ! then you conceive my meaning ?

Dar. (*checking himself*) If you have business, state it plainly.

Del'E. Do you desire it ?

Dar. What means——

Del'E. Are you prepar'd for plain and honest speaking ?

Dar. I'm not prepar'd for rude interrogation.
(*rises to go away*)

Fran. (*rises and stops him*) Listen one instant, and, perhaps, what he has spoken will hardly be construed thus.

Dar. Damnation ! To the point at once.

Del'E. (*rises*) With all my soul. In one plain word then, learn that chance, or rather that good Power that governs chance and the destiny of man, first placed your nephew, Julio, in my hands. This defrauded orphan, whose misfortune should have doubled the tenderness of his natural protector towards him ; this outcast, deaf and dumb, is still alive ; and by our mouths now demands of you the restitution of his name and fortune.

Dar. (*after a convulsion of his whole frame*) Lives, do you say ? still lives ?—You will not wonder, if I am astonished, while I listen to fables such as these.

Del'E. No, sir : struck as I see you are by this discovery, my only wonder is, that your emotions are not more terrible.

Dar. And who are you, who arrogantly presume to interpret looks ? You, who attribute the crimes you first invent for sordid, selfish ends, and dare pronounce men guilty in the face of proof.

Fran. Not so ; the proofs are ours.

Dar. Are you sure of that ?

Del'E. Recollect, sir, that he is your nephew, and let your conscience answer. Were you present in his expiring moments ? Dare you deliberately affirm you saw him dead ?

Dar. (*after another dreadful emotion, and a pause before he can recover himself*) And do you know the man to whom you put these dishonourable and malignant questions ?

Fran. Far otherwise :—we come not with malignity, but with sincere solicitude to save the father of St. Alme, the uncle of Julio, from public ignominy, and inevitable impending ruin.

Dar. Begone ! And if you are vain enough to think your brawling eloquence has power to overthrow the credit and character of Darlemont, to annul a legal act, a formal register of death, exert that power : I hurl defiance at you.

Fran. Rush not on your destruction ; confide in us ; and believe that, next to those just claims of which I am the assertor, nothing, no nothing, can be more sacred to me, than the honour of the father of my friend.

Dar. My heart throws back the imputation. I dare your malice to produce one proof, that this supposititious foundling is the descendant of the house of Harancour.

Del'E. A thousand ! The time when he was found ; his transport on re-entering this the lov'd place of his nativity ; his emotion on first seeing this house ;—

Fran. His infirmity ; his striking likeness to the late president his father ; the declaration of poor Clandine ;—

Del'E. His own declarations.

Dar. His declarations !

Del'E. His.—Be not too obstinately incredulous.

Fran. Yes ; foster'd by his humanity, and guided by his lessons, Julio has found in Del'Epee a more

than father : genius has compensated the wrongs that nature did him, and made him, even in dumbness, eloquently intelligible.

Dar. Concerted fraud and artifice. I know my holds of safety, and despise your menace. His death is register'd.

Del'E. Suppose that register a forgery.

Dar. (aside) So ; then the villain has betray'd me !

Del'E. It staggers him ; we triumph. *(aside to Franval)*—I see, your lips are ready to avow the secret of your heart. O, for your own sake, listen to the charities of nature !

Fran. Free yourself at once from the torments that too long have burrowed in your bosom.

Dar. Why do I submit to the ascendant these men assume over me ?

Fran. (taking his hand) Yield to our friendship.

Del'E. (taking his other hand) Yield to our prayers.

Dar. Leave me, I say—begone !—never will I acknowledge this impostor ! *(going)*

enter ST. ALME.

St. A. O, my father, have compassion on me ! on yourself ! my cousin Julio—

Dar. What, you conspire against me ! St. Alme ! St. Alme !

St. A. If I was ever dear to you—

Dar. Peace, fool ? Join to calumniate your father, and defraud yourself !

(Del'Epee sends Franval out—he returns immediately.)

St. A. Do not, do not aggravate our dishonour !—Relent ! relent ! Let me not hate myself, by knowing that your affection for me led you into crimes, at which your soul revolts. Have I not witnessed the agonies of your despair—the horrors of your self-accusation ? O, sir, do not make it believed that you justify the deeds, which I know you abhor.

Dar. Hence ! For ever leave me ! I can maintain my rights, though I am deserted by an unnatural son.

St. A. Since you will drive me from you, sir, I go.—Enjoy your riches ; but enjoy them in cheerless solitude : no child, no friend to share them. Where I shall hide this dishonour'd head I know not. But to haunt with savages, or dwell with lepers, will be paradise to that board, where a son and father must daily meet blacken'd with mutual guilt, and consciously living under each other's contempt.

(*going*)

Dar. Stay, ruffian ! monster !—No, begone—league with the assassins of your father, and of your own hopes : I shall find means to confront you all.

(*going*)

enter MADAME FRANVAL, THEODORE, and MARI-ANNE.

St. A. Confront this witness too. (*points to Theodore*)

Dar. (*turns round and sees Theodore*) Horror ! madness !—Hide me from his sight !

St. A. Turn to him—take him to you : his looks speak blessings and forgiveness.

Dar. To be disgrac'd—never ! This is the very crisis of my fate, and I will stand the event. I do look on him. Is this your instrument ?—I know him not.—And you at once decide your choice—Him, or me, you must renounce this instant.

St. A. Put me not to so severe a trial.

Dar. Enough—'Tis past—Farewell for ever.

(*going*)

St. A. (*falls on his knees, and catches Darlemont*) In the name of all that's sacred, my father !—You heed me not !—You fly me !—Look on me, father !—For all our sakes—relent—relent !

Dar. Never, never.

St. A. O ! sir ! sir—I must be heard.

[exit Darlemont, in the greatest agony, dragging St. Alme after him on his knees.—Theodore all this while in the greatest agitation.

Del'E. Obdurate man!—Be still, be still, poor boy, you shall have justice yet.

Mad. F. Now, son; can you any longer hesitate?

Fran. No; I should become criminal myself, if I delayed the execution of the trust repos'd in me; this dreadful memorial must instantly be preferr'd. (*takes the accusation from his pocket*)

Mar. Then we are lost for ever!

enter DOMINIQUE and CLAUDINE.

Mad. F. Well, Dominique; well, Claudine! Hey-day! where are your companions!—What, have you brought none of the old servants with you?

Dom. It isn't for want of searching for 'em, madame. First, we called at Denys', the groom's; —he and his old wife went out early in the morning, nobody knows where.

Clau. Then we went to the coachman's widow's.

Dom. She was gone to pass the day at her cousin's in the country. However, we told all the neighbours to be sure to tell 'em they were wanted, the moment they came back.

Fran. You took care to conceal the motive of our sending for them?

Dom. O, to be sure.—You'll never catch me blabbing, when I'm trusted with a secret.

Fran. 'Tis well.—Wait without.

[exeunt Dominique and Claudine]
The facts this paper contains, will, I doubt not, excite the immediate attention and zeal of the magistrates. We must be gone. If St. Alme returns in our absence, calm and console him, I beseech you!—You, Marianne, particularly—you, my sister, tell him what I undergo.—But, come; a single moment of delay may—(*a noise within*)

Mar. Hark! hark! What noise!

Del'E. It is St. Alme.—Good Heaven ! In what agitation ! in what alarm !

enter ST. ALME.

St. A. O, sir !—My friend !—(*falls on Franval*)

Fran. St. Alme !—Speak—speak—

St. A. My father—

Fran. Heavens !

St. A. My father—

Del'E. Go on.

St. A. Distracted by Julio's wrongs—I ran, I burst into the chamber with my father—Dupre follow'd, and at once own'd he had reveal'd all to you ; and was resolved (unless he did the young count justice) by a public confession to make him the parner of his punishment.—My father shudder'd—maddening and agoniz'd I drew my sword, and vow'd if he persisted to refuse his acknowledgment of Julio, that moment to expire on its point before his eyes.—The dread of indelible disgrace—the cry of my despair—the horror of my death prevail'd—nature triumph'd—my father relented—and with a trembling hand—there, there—(*gives Del'Epee a paper*)

Del'E. (*reads*) “ I do acknowledge Theodore, the pupil of Del'Epee, to be Julio, the lawful count of Harancour ; and am prepared immediately to reinstate him in all his rights. Darlemont.”—To thee, all-gracious Heaven, be endless praise and thanks ! (*gives the paper to Theodore*)

Fran. (*tearing the accusation to pieces*) From what a load is my heart relieved !

(*Theodore, having read the paper, throws himself at Del'Epee's feet and kisses them ; rises transported, and embraces Franval : then running towards St. Alme, pauses, as if struck by some sudden thought ; looks stedfastly at him, and runs to the table, where he writes something under Darlemont's declaration*)

Fran. What would he do? What is his design?

Del'E. I know not.

Mad. F. He seems extremely mov'd.

Mar. How the tears stream from his eyes!

(Theodore returns to St. Alme, takes one of his hands and places it on his heart, then gives what he has been writing into his other hand, and makes signs to him to read it)

St. A. (reads) "Half of my fortune must be yours, St. Alme.—If you refuse me, I here vow again to disappear, and never more be heard of. From our cradles we were accustomed to share every good, like brothers; and I can never be happy at the expense of my friend."—Still the same, noble Julio! (embraces Theodore)

Del'E. This single act overpays all I have done for him.

Mad. F. The very spirit of the old count.—He's his father's son.

St. A. O, that I could efface the memory of thy wrongs! How shall I ever bear the weight of that recollection!

Del'E. (looking at Marianne) If this young lady would but kindly condescend to take a title to assist you, you might, perhaps—

Mad. F. Nay, nay: reflect, sir, that such a union would—

Del'E. Bless, for ever bless, two virtuous hearts, that Heav'n formed for each other, and make the happiness of this fortunate day complete.

Mad. F. I protest, I can't—really I don't know—

Fran. I am sure, madame—

Mad. F. Upon my word, son, you seem to persuade me to any thing—(to St. Alme) You need not speak, sir.—(to Marianne) No, nor you, Marianne. The matter has been settled among you, I see, and now you pretend to ask my approbation: though, after that letter, I assure you, if you had not

found a friend, to whose intercession nothing can be refused, I should not have been prevail'd with to give my consent.

(Theodore, after a sign from Del'Epee, kisses Marianne, and gives her hand to St. Alme)

St. A. O, joy unutterable !

Mar. How are we all beholden to your goodness !

Del'E. 'Tis to the prudence of your brother, and to the fortitude of St. Alme, we owe our final triumph. Consol'd by love, by friendship, and a father's return to virtue, all cause of regret may well be forgotten, sir. And let us hope, that the example of this protected orphan, may terrify the unjust man from the abuse of trust, and confirm the benevolent in the discharge of all the gentle duties of humanity.

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY GEORGE COLMAN, ESQ.

Spoken by Miss De Camp.

HERE's *Dumby* come to speak—'was ten to one
That I had talk'd before the play was done.
Of all our authors, he is far most cunning
Who can ensure a woman's tongue from running.
Speech is our nature ;—if I err, convict me—
What *bachelor* so rude to contradict me ?
Talking 's our charter ;—more than life we prize it ;
I'm sure no *married gentleman* denies it.
Speech is our birth-right—ask the ladies whether :—
They'll all maintain it—and all talk together.

The woman who cried pippins on the ice
Fell in, and cut her head off in a trice ;
Her head slid in, still jealous of its power,
And bawl'd out “ Pip, pip, pip,” for half an hour.

Our charter prov'd, in my own right I come
To ask you how you like *The Deaf and Dumb*?
—Be not too noisy, gentlemen !—Why need you ?
—Our charter !—Women's voices supersede you.
Pray, ladies, tell them what they ought to say !
You smile !—I thank you !—And so speed our play !—
One *dumby* in our piece 'twas bold to try—
Strike not the talkers, all, as dumb as I !

If here to-night our efforts be rejected,
For the first time, an *orphan's unprotected*.
If to the summit of our wish we reach,
Then, unlike women, gratitude wants speech.

